

Garza, 2nd Vice President; Stefani Montiel, 3rd Vice President; Sasha Sullivan, Secretary; Steve Roth; and Gibby Escobedo, Parliamentarian. Additionally, the Tejano Academy would not have been realized without the hard work, unwavering commitment and long hours persevered by Executive Director, Chayo Zaldivar. With this great team's continued hard work, the Tejano Academy is filling an important void in the Tejano Music Industry.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to recognize the many achievements and services provided by the Academy of Tejano Artists and Musicians. Please join me in honoring the Tejano Academy on September 19, 2004 for their 1st Annual Awards Presentation and Banquet.

THE KANSAS-PARAGUAY PARTNERSHIP

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 2004

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, August 1, 2004 a devastating fire engulfed the Ycuá Bolaños supermarket in Asunción, Paraguay, resulting in 399 deaths and many more injuries. In light of the long-standing relationship between the State of Kansas and Paraguay, on behalf of the citizens of Kansas' Third Congressional District, and on behalf of all Kansans, I wish to express our deep condolences to the citizens of Paraguay after this time of national tragedy.

The Kansas Paraguay Partnership was started 36 years ago as part of the international Partners of the Americas, headquartered in Washington, D.C., in which states in the United States are paired with countries or regions in Latin America and the Caribbean. The cross cultural pairing between Paraguay and Kansas is one of 60 partnerships throughout the Americas whose linkages provide assistance when help is needed.

The relief effort in the aftermath of the fire was directed and carried out by volunteers from Partners of the Americas' Paraguayan chapter with assistance from its counterpart chapter here in Kansas. All firemen in Paraguay are volunteers and depend to a great extent on donated equipment. Efforts are currently underway in both Paraguay and Kansas to replace the fire equipment which was lost in fighting the fire.

Partners of the Americas is today one of the largest private sector networks of volunteers in the Western Hemisphere. It mobilizes citizens to serve as a grassroots, people-to-people catalyst for change. Volunteer initiatives have resulted in a rich array of programs, such as the Kansas-Paraguay efforts to strengthen citizen participation and improve farming operations, as well as increasing understanding through cultural and educational exchanges. This unique, twofold approach has turned thousands of ideas into creative action across borders.

Mr. Speaker, I know that all members of this House join with me in sharing our support with the people of Paraguay during this difficult time.

RECOGNIZING REPRESENTATIVE D.J. DAVIS

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 2004

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, Missouri State Representative D.J. Davis is retiring at the end of the year. He has served the people of the 122nd district since 1996.

A graduate of North Andrew High School in Rosendale, Missouri, Representative Davis graduated with a bachelor of science degree in secondary education from Northwest Missouri State University in 1962 and a master's degree in secondary administration in 1970. Before serving in the Missouri House of Representatives, Representative Davis worked in the field of education for more than 30 years. He retired as the principal of Odessa High School in Odessa, Missouri.

As an educator, Representative Davis was recognized for his contributions to the field. He received the Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals Silver Service Award in 1991 for 25 years as a secondary school principal. Additionally, he received awards from the Lafayette County Farm Bureau, the Mighty MO 4-H Club, the Missouri Association for Career and Technical Education and the AARP.

Mr. Speaker, whether as an educator or a legislator, Representative Davis has worked on behalf of others and is truly a role model for young Missourians. He has made important contributions to both fields. I know my fellow Members of the House will join me in thanking him for his many years of service and in wishing him all the best in the years ahead.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EMERGENCY LOAN ABUSE PREVENTION ACT OF 2004

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Emergency Loan Abuse Prevention Act of 2004, along with my colleagues, Representatives VAN HOLLEN and GEORGE MILLER. Through a loophole in the Higher Education Act, nearly \$1 billion in special student loan subsidies will be paid by the Federal government to lenders this year, rather than used for financial aid for students. This bill closes this loophole and requires the savings to be used to increase the maximum Pell grant.

This antiquated subsidy results from an obscure provision in the Higher Education Act and its regulations which provide lenders a 9.5 percent rate of return on certain student loans. This rate of return is excessive when you consider that lenders are guaranteed approximately a 3.5 percent rate of return on other student loans.

The 9.5 percent guarantee was established in the high interest rate year of 1980. Congress intended for it to phase out of existence beginning in 1993. But through a loophole, the guarantee has continued. Both the New York Times and the L.A. Times have reported on

this loophole. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has issued a report which calls for the Department of Education to correct its regulations on this matter—an action the Bush Department of Education is refusing to take.

This special subsidy has caused a lost financial opportunity for students. Students are bearing the brunt of rising college costs and shrinking grant aid. This bill provides an opportunity to correct this problem.

Despite this issue being addressed in the last Presidential Budget, the recent reaction by the Bush Administration has been inaction and silence. Rather than eliminate the use of this provision through immediate regulation, the Bush Administration has let this special subsidy triple in the past 3 years. In FY 2001, the 9.5 percent guarantee cost American taxpayers approximately \$200 million. Now GAO and others have estimated that this cost is projected to be nearly five times greater this fiscal year. The GAO report estimates that on top of this year's near billion dollar cost, growth in the special subsidy will cost an additional \$2.8 billion in future years, if not halted immediately.

This bill closes the loophole which the Bush Department of Education and this Republican Congress has permitted to go unchecked. The amendment ends this special subsidy and expends the savings to increase the maximum Pell grant for needy students.

I urge Members to join me and others in supporting this legislation.

THE PRAIRIE ROSE CHAPTER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION SALUTES CONSTITUTION WEEK

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 2004

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, the week of September 17–23 has been officially designated as Constitution Week. This marks the 217th anniversary of the signing of our Constitution.

The guardian of our liberties, our Constitution established our republic as a self-governing nation dedicated to rule by law. This document is the cornerstone of our freedom. It was written to protect every American from the abuse of power by government. Without that restraint, our founders believed the republic would perish.

The ideals upon which our Constitution is based are reinforced each day by the success of our political system to which it gave birth. The success of our way of government requires an enlightened citizenry.

Constitution Week provides an opportunity for all Americans to recall the achievements of our founders, the nature of limited government, and the rights, privileges and responsibilities of citizenship. It provides us the opportunity to be better informed about our rights, freedoms and duties as citizens.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I particularly want to take note of the outstanding work of the Prairie Rose Chapter of the Kansas Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, which is actively involved in the Third Congressional District in events this week commemorating Constitution Week. The Prairie Rose Chapter has been involved with this effort in our communities for a number of years and I commend them for doing so.

Our Constitution has served us well for over 200 years, but it will continue as a strong, vibrant, and vital foundation for freedom only so long as the American people remain dedicated to the basic principles on which it rests. Thus, as the United States continues into its third century of constitutional democracy, let us renew our commitment to, in the words of our Constitution's preamble: "form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity . . ." I know that the Prairie Rose Chapter of the Kansas Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution joins with me in urging all Americans to renew their commitment to, and understanding of, our Constitution, particularly during our current time of crisis, when Americans are fighting overseas to defend our liberties here at home.

RECOGNIZING REPRESENTATIVE
BILL L. RANSALL

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 2004

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, a distinguished career in the Missouri House of Representatives will soon end. Representative Bill Ransall will be retiring at the end of the year.

Rep. Ransall was elected to the Waynesville City Council in 1978. He dedicated the next 18 years to serving the people of Waynesville, taking the position of Mayor Pro Tem in 1982. He then was elected Mayor, a position he held from 1988 through 1996.

The people of the 148th district first elected Rep. Ransall to the Missouri House in 1996 and reelected him to the maximum four terms allowed under state term limits laws. His leadership was recognized in the legislature and he was elected to the post of Assistant Minority Floor Leader. His advice and counsel have been sought in the legislature and in the administration on the complex issues of the state budget and legislative procedure.

In addition to his legislative work, he has a record of service and leadership in the community—including the United Methodist Church, Association of the United States Army, Masonic Lodge No. 375 AF and AM, Abou Ben Adhem, Scottish Rite, Sojourners, Committee of Fifty, Missouri Cattlemens Association, Farm Bureau, Ducks Unlimited, and the National Wild Turkey Federation. He also has been a successful businessman and farmer.

Rep. Ransall has earned the respect of many throughout his district and the state. He received of the Outstanding Civilian Award with Medal by the Department of the Army. He also has been recognized as Legislator of the Year by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce, earned the Legislative Recognition award from the Missouri Association for Career and Technical Education, and received the Missouri Vocational Special Needs Association Distinguished Service for Community Involvement Award.

His tireless work on behalf of his constituents created many opportunities for economic expansion in the 148th district and beyond. He has been an effective advocate for his neigh-

bors in their issues with the state agencies in Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, Representative Ransall's dedication to public service is an example to us all. He has devoted many years of his life to taking care of the needs of others. I am sure the other Members of the House will join me in thanking my friend Bill for his hard work and in wishing him and his wife, Pat, all the best in the years to come.

HAITI NEEDS HELP FROM THE
UNITED STATES—NOW

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 2004

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address a human crisis of the highest magnitude. It demands a strong, unequivocal and immediate response from the international community and particularly from the United States.

The latest storm struck Gonaives on Saturday. So far, the only aid from the Bush Administration has been \$60,000 in relief assistance. This is just a drop in the bucket compared to the desperate need of the Haitian people. It is wholly inadequate. The Bush Administration needs to exercise leadership in coordinating immediate assistance from our own country and the international community.

While the Bush Administration is watching the development of this disaster and assessing what its response will be, thousands of Haitians are suffering. This situation demands an immediate emergency response from the United States Government.

As reported in these Miami Herald and the New York Times articles, nearly 700 lives have been lost in Haiti because of the flooding and mudslides triggered by Tropical Storm Jeanne. Already the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, this new crisis has made conditions in Haiti even worse. And the desperate situation that Haiti faces today because of this disaster comes on top of the catastrophic floods only 4 months ago with over 3,000 Haitians killed, missing, or presumed dead.

The press has reported widespread human suffering in Haiti, with unburied bodies in the streets; hospitals and hospital equipment rendered unusable because of water and mud, grave shortages of fresh water, food and antibiotics, a very real threat of public health epidemics, and thousands without even rudimentary shelter.

The government of Haiti is totally unequipped and unable to deal with this massive crisis, because they have neither the resources nor the organization. Private voluntary groups are reportedly overwhelmed by the enormity of this crisis.

Given the gravity of this situation, in which thousands of Haitian lives hang in the balance, I call upon President Bush to immediately send significant U.S. emergency assistance to Haiti in the form of food, medicine, fresh water, clothing, and emergency shelter, and to immediately coordinate, with the international community, the manpower, transportation and distribution of these needed commodities to provide immediate relief to the people of Gonaives and the surrounding countryside.

We know from the storm damage in our own country that fast action is imperative in natural disasters; Haiti's poverty and the size and scope of the disaster there makes the need for speed even greater.

If ever there was a time when the people of Haiti need the help and support of the United States Government, it is now. I urge President Bush not to delay this aid any further, but to act immediately.

[From the Miami Herald, Herald.com,
September 21, 2004]

STORM FLOODS KILL MORE THAN 600 IN HAITI
(By Amy Bracken)

GONAIVES, HAITI—Rescuers dug through mud and ruined homes for bodies Tuesday, expecting the death toll of more than 600 from Tropical Storm Jeanne to rise even further, with half the crowded northern city of Gonaives still under water from the weekend's devastating winds and rain.

Gonaives was hardest hit in the latest tragedy to beset Haiti in a year of revolts, military interventions and devastating floods. Bodies, including many children, were stacked at the city's main morgue, where weeping relatives searched for loved ones.

At least 500 people were killed in the city, according to Toussaint Kongo-Doudou, a spokesman for the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Haiti.

"I lost my kids and there's nothing I can do," said Jean Estimable, whose 2-year-old daughter was killed and another of his five children was missing and presumed dead.

"All I have is complete despair and the clothes I'm wearing," he said Monday, pointing to a floral dress and ripped pants borrowed from a neighbor.

Floods are particularly damaging in Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, because it is almost completely deforested, leaving few roots to hold back rushing waters or mudslides. Most of the trees have been chopped down to make charcoal for cooking.

Aid workers were struggling to get relief to victims amid worries over looting and crime, said Hans Havik from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

"Security is little bit tense. We have to be careful with bringing in the materials because we risk looting," Havik said.

Three trucks carrying Red Cross relief supplies rolled into Gonaives Monday, but before they could reach their destination at the mayor's office, two of them were mobbed by people who grabbed blankets and towels. U.N. troops stood by watching.

People tripped over each other to grab tiny bags of water thrown from a Red Cross truck in front of City Hall, where officials said about 500 injured were treated Monday.

Dieufort Deslorges, a spokesman for the government civil protection agency, described the situation in Gonaives as "catastrophic." He said survivors need everything from potable water to food, clothing, medication and disinfectants.

"We expect to find dozens more bodies, especially in Gonaives, as . . . floodwaters recede," Deslorges said.

Floodwaters destroyed homes and crops in the Artibonite region that is Haiti's breadbasket.

"Everyone is desperate," said Pelissier Heber of the Artibonite Chamber of Commerce.

Elsewhere, 56 people were killed in northern Port-de-Paix and 17 died in the nearby town of Terre Neuve, officials said. Deslorges of the civil protection agency reported another 49 bodies recovered in other villages and towns, most in the northwest.